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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 006276

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR
DS/IP/NEA;
DRL FOR A/S CRANER; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN;
USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG PHUM PREL PTER ASEC CASC GZ IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: 29 PALESTINIANS ARRESTED IN THE WEST
BANK; AT LEAST SIX PALESTINIAN MILITANTS WOUNDED IN GAZA:
DECEMBER 10, 2004 (1500 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: The IDF arrested 29 Palestinians in the West Bank, including presidential candidate Bassam Salhi, December 9-10. In Gaza, at least six Palestinian militants were reportedly wounded in two incidents involving the firing of missiles in the northern Gaza strip and another near the Sufa crossing. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: Nil.

3. (SBU) ARRESTS/SECURITY:

-- Arrests: The IDF December 10 entered al-Dhahiriya village and arrested four Hamas candidates running for the village council in the upcoming December 23 municipal elections.

-- Arrest: The IDF December 10 arrested presidential candidate from the Palestinian People,s Party Bassam Salhi after he attempted to enter Jerusalem without a permit. Salhi was still under Israeli detention in Jerusalem as of 1500 hours.

-- Arrest/Clashes: The IDF the evening of December 9 entered Tulkarem refugee camp and arrested a senior Fatah activist. Clashes erupted between the IDF and Palestinians in the camp and two explosive devices detonated in the vicinity of IDF soldiers during the arrest operation, but there were no injuries reported from the incident.

-- Arrests/Clashes/Injuries: The IDF December 9 entered Bayt Liqya west of Ramallah and arrested two Palestinians. The IDF used tear gas to disperse Palestinians throwing stones during the arrest operation, causing some injuries.

-- Arrests: The IDF arrested 12 Palestinians, the majority associated with Hamas, the evening of December 9-10 in several West Bank localities including Nablus, Bethlehem, Qalqilya, and the Ramallah area.

-- IDF soldiers December 9 discovered three pipe bombs weighing together more than 40 kilograms near an Israeli settlement north of Ramallah. The IDF has initiated an investigation.

4. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- The Palestinian leadership has concluded its visit to Lebanon and is scheduled to arrive December 10 in Jordan.

Gaza

5. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: According to UNRWA and Israeli media, four Palestinian militants affiliated with the Popular Resistance Committee were wounded December 9 when an Israeli aircraft fired a missile at a car near Sufa crossing in the Gaza strip. According to UNRWA, four Palestinian militants belonging to the Popular Resistance Committee (PRC), were wounded in the attack, including the primary target, PRC leader Jamal Abu Samhadana.

--Injuries: According to UNRWA, the IAF also fired a missile at a house containing munition production facilities -- Qassam rockets -- in Bayt Lahiyah December 9, injuring several people. The house belonged to Mahmoud al-Madhour, a local Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade leader.

-- Mortars/Rockets: Israeli media reported that Palestinians fired a Qassam rocket at the perimeter fence near the Sufa crossing and a mortar round at a settlement near Gush Qatif on December 10. No injuries were reported in either incident.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported two shooting incidents on December 9, one near Gush Katif and the other one in Rafah Yam, but no injuries resulted.

-- Explosions: Nil.

16. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS: Nil.

17. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and diplomats and for a limited number of Palestinians. According to UNRWA, 200 Palestinian laborers crossed on December 10. UNRWA reported that the IDF announced it would now allow national staff of UN organizations to cross at Erez in vehicles, rather than on foot, with prior coordination through COGAT, but has not yet implemented the new policy.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone remained closed, except for factory owners, on December 10.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers December 10, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open, but reportedly operating slowly.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures December 10. Although the IDF no longer prohibits the exit of male Palestinians age 16-35 from the Gaza Strip, lengthy checks at the border mean that few Palestinians in this category are actually able to exit. There are no age restrictions for entry into Gaza.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed December 10. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

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